

Greetings. I have been attempting to facilitate obtaining a compounding pharmacy prescription for my wife since December with no luck. As you are probably well aware, compounding pharmacies have had reputations that vary quite a bit. We have been utilizing a branch of the Northwest Compounding Pharmacy in Oregon for over a decade with great success. Northwest Compounding Pharmacy (NWCP) is reportedly the largest compounding pharmacy in Oregon and Washington with multiple branch outlets.

My wife and I have attempted at least 4 times with different representatives we reach through the number listed on our new OptumRX pharmacy card, plus being called from several numbers from folks who claim to be with OptumRx, but their number never matches up to the OptumRx card, which sometimes we wonder if they are actually real representatives or hoaxes.

Anyway, we have had at least 4 different pharmacies proposed by these representatives to remedy the situation. We tried the closest one, and after having my wife's prescription sent to them, were informed that they had been trying since the first of January to obtain a contract with OptumRx with no success. We were informed that the prescription that we had once been obtaining with NWCP for \$4 would be \$160. NWCP, to their credit, will fill it for \$32.

I see no reason to deal with a compounding pharmacy from Washington, Phoenix, or California that we know nothing about and cannot deal with in person if needed, especially when NWCP has multiple branches.

I would like the State of Alaska to facilitate OptumRx reaching agreement with NWCP on a contract, especially since Aetna was able to.

Thank you for considering my concerns.

Craig A. Burns

Phone: [REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Jim Morrison** <[REDACTED]>

Date: Tue, Mar 5, 2019 at 5:48 AM

Subject: Optum R/X

To: <[Emily.ricci@alaska.gov](mailto:Emily.ricci@alaska.gov)>

My name is Jim Morrison, a tier 1 retiree. In preparing to switch from the best Pharmacy Manager we have had since 1995, In Jan I went to 2 different Doctors to get new scrips for drugs I have taken for 20 years. I did that because Optum wrote that no Aetna scrips will honored and each person needs new ones after Jan1. The drugs were [REDACTED]

In checking with Optum, they had no record of receiving the scrips. after a week , someone wrote me a letter and said [REDACTED] was not available for mail order and I should go to my local Pharmacy to buy it off the shelf. Someone called me and said they are rolling over a scrip for a face cream I did not need, and I asked about the lost scrips. They have not found them to this day

They asked what were the drugs, I told them , as well as telling them I would not give them my credit card the foreign woman wanted, nor would I ever use them again, but go to Walgreens each time. Shortly they said they were rolling over Aetnas unfilled scrips for [REDACTED]

I am the retired General Manager of ATU, and I just cannot wait to see how our wonderful health care gets fixed in the future. Jim Morrison

I received a E Mail yesterday presumed to be from the DOA and a Optum RX coordinator asking exactly how my name is written on my Aetna card and my phone number. It seemed to be bogus and I deleted it.

Jim Morrison Tier 1 retiree

please add preventive care to our medical plan for retirees. I am relatively healthy but since retiring have not had a physical to make sure I remain healthy. I thoroughly enjoyed attending the health fair that Alaska Retirees sponsored but the slots fill up so fast that some may not be able to participate. Thank you.

Jeri

p.s. I also want to thank you for covering the new shingles shot! I hope you cover the pneumonia vaccine as well. Let's keep our retirees healthy!!!!

--

***Jeri Maxwell***

*RETIRED! "JUST DO IT!"*

Yo good folks at DRB

First--the town hall meetings are GREAT!! and the woman leading them does an outstanding job. You are one of the outstanding folks working for SOA. I am a past health care trustee for local 52 so understand well the work and commitment that goes into doing this job well and sing your praises as to what you are doing

Question 1--Because I am frugal, I typically re-use the durable frames I bought in the past. Some of my frames are over 20 years old and still work well. I do this on purpose to save the trust and myself money. That said I have extremely poor vision and could not live a normal life with the lenses that are covered. I need special materials that cost more which I have to cover out of pocket. Please consider allowing participants to opt out of frames ever two years allowing them to use at least a portion of that allowance for medically required lenses that could include transition, smooth bifocals and such. This shouldn't be an added expense as I know folks get new frames just because they are covered and frames are expensive.

Question 2-My wife and I recently learned we need hearing aids. Presently only the hearing aids are covered. Other folks I have talked to buy expensive aids using the whole \$2000 in coverage. It is not clear they get higher value by using the whole allowance. There is a way to improve the benefits of having hearing aids without adding to program cost. I found a good deal on aids that after 80% reimbursement leaves about \$600 unspent. The city of Juneau considers associated devices typically bought with aids (cleaning device and improved TV hearing devices) as medically necessary so does not tax them. At Costco, these accessory device will cost about \$200. By allowing the purchase of these accessories with the lower cost hearing aids could result in overall savings to the program and improves each clients value by using the aids.

Question 3--Retirees with mental health issues presently have to find a provider who accepts medicare if they don't want to incur high out of pocket costs. Quite frankly in Juneau and smaller towns there are very few if any qualified providers who accept medicare. Going to 'Joe's pretty good mental health counseling service' could and has often resulted in no improvement and might even increase damage from PTSD and sexual which benefit from highly specialized. State Employees are covered at 80% of cost for non-network mental health providers. As a step in the direction towards greater health, please consider enlarging the group of providers that retirees can choose from by allowing 80% of coverage for using Aetna network providers who do not accept Medicare.

Comment-I want to add my voice towards increasing the number of people serviced at local health fairs. This last year my wife and I delayed scheduling by a week and missed out on this valued and needed service. The test I had to pay for during my annual cost a fair bit and was not as comprehensive. If it helps me and my wife get the test for sure, I am happy to volunteer to help before and during the fair.

thanks again and positive thoughts--

bob piorkowski

**From:** [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 21, 2019 11:07 AM  
**To:** DOA DRB Townhall (DOA sponsored) <[doa.drb.townhall@alaska.gov](mailto:doa.drb.townhall@alaska.gov)>  
**Subject:** Lasik

Hi DRB –

Would you consider adding Lasik coverage, or at least a percentage of the cost? I had lasik surgery 16 years ago and had to pay 100% of the costs personally. Since I had the surgery I have not needed to purchase lenses or frames again - before that I got new lenses every year and new frames every-other year. I am sure, over time, the costs of the lenses and frames would be much more costly than having the lasik surgery.

I think over time having some form of lasik coverage would save the state money. Would you consider adding this coverage?

Thank you,

Ric Plate

PS – Thanks for the Tele-Town Hall phone conferences, they are helpful.

**From:** [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 21, 2019 11:22 AM  
**To:** DOA DRB Townhall (DOA sponsored) <[doa.drb.townhall@alaska.gov](mailto:doa.drb.townhall@alaska.gov)>  
**Subject:** Age limits

Hi DRB,

Many of the provisions of obamacare I do not like, but there is one provision that I would like the State to consider adding. Under obamacare insurance coverage is suppose to cover our children until age (or through age) 26 for unmarried children.. The state retiree insurance is exempt from that provision so every year I have to get proof my over 18 year old children are full-time students and then coverage is only until they are 23 years old. I also understand it would take a legislative change to approve insurance coverage until they are 26 years old.

The obamacare act provides insurance coverage for nearly all the 18-26 year old's in the country it seems incredibly unfair of the State to be exempt from this coverage.

I suspect there are very few retirees who have children in this age category still so adding coverage until they are age 26 would not be a big financial burden on the state.

The government is extremely frustrating in that there are always so many exemptions to all the laws.

Please consider adding insurance coverage to include children in the 18-26 year bracket.

Thank you,

Ric Plate



**From:** Mueca, Andrea B (DOA) <[andrea.mueca@alaska.gov](mailto:andrea.mueca@alaska.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 21, 2019 10:37 AM  
**To:** DOA DRB Townhall (DOA sponsored) <[doa.drb.townhall@alaska.gov](mailto:doa.drb.townhall@alaska.gov)>  
**Subject:** Suzanne from Idaho

Good morning,

Suzanne from Idaho did not want to ask in public, but had a comment she would like the modernization committee consider is to make the DVA plan a cafeteria style. Not all retirees need audio, vision, or dental, but want one or the other. She understands that could raise certain rates, but would like it considered for modernization.

Andrea Mueca

*Health Operations Manager*

Division of Retirement and Benefits

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